

# *The* American Teacher

*Democracy in Education; Education for Democracy*

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*America First!*



In Justice to all, in protecting the weak from abuses--America First!

In Freedom for all, in destroying privilege and persecution--America First!

In Opportunity for all, in training for service and devotion--America First!

In Brotherhood for all, in aspiring toward generous co-operation--America First!

In Democracy for all, in leading the world forward--America First!

# A New Method in Classroom Management

JEANETTE FRANK

Julia Richman High School, New York City

WITHOUT EXCITING interest a lesson will not impress itself on the mind of the pupil, and the knowledge imparted is superficial and soon forgotten. I am therefore trying a new method with my classes, the aims of which are: to create a keen interest in the subject; to give each individual an opportunity to exercise her originality; to clear up difficulties by encouraging pupils to ask questions, and to cultivate independence of thought. These aims are more easily obtained if a friendly relationship is created between pupil and teacher.

The girls of my Biology classes were given the privilege of suggesting their own topics in certain subjects. Each one did research work on the topic she selected and handed in an account of it. The result was so gratifying that I thought it would be a good idea to have each girl feel her responsibility for the success of the lesson by making her a vital part of it. I therefore introduced the following plan which I am at the present time using.

As soon as a class enters the room, a chairman calls the meeting to order. Nominations are in order for a new chairman for the following day and election by open ballot takes place. Every girl is given an opportunity to act as chairman at some time or other during the semester. The chairman then conducts the review lesson. The teacher is on hand duty between periods and when she enters the room, the work has already begun and no time has been wasted.

The chairman has the privilege of conducting the lesson according to her own ideas. This gives an opportunity for originality and thus sets up competition, each girl vying with the others for the honor of having the best plan. Many ways for carrying on the lesson have been devised. Each girl acts as secretary for the next day, for each one writes up the new ideas gained during the pre-

ceding lesson. The chairman may call for these notes; she may have notebooks closed and either ask questions herself or distribute them in writing; she may also make use of the blackboards. Discussions on topics ensue and if the girls can reach no conclusion, the chairman, if able, settles the matter in question; otherwise the teacher is appealed to.

To facilitate progress, if unnecessary details are discussed, the teacher interferes. If she believes the ideas are not understood by all, she will ask questions which will clear up the necessary points. The review usually takes about fifteen minutes, which is the amount of time ordinarily spent on such work. The lesson and chairman are then criticised so that the next chairman may avoid the errors and improve upon the ideas of her predecessor. The teacher then resumes her instruction in new work.

The advantages of this system are many. The teacher, the chairman, and the class, all profit by it. The teacher is given an opportunity to find out which points she has not made clear. She is also enabled to discover what appeals to the pupils the most, so that she may improve her future lessons and present them in a manner suitable to the class.

The chairman learns how to show a forcible character by keeping an orderly meeting. She acquires the ability to prepare and ask questions. She is given the opportunity to assume the teacher's position so that she may see things both from her own and from the teacher's point of view. She will therefore appreciate the consideration shown her by the teacher and will do her best to bring about the co-operation of the teacher and the pupils. She realizes that the success of the lesson depends on her and makes every possible effort to attain proficiency in the subject. She tries to show her ability to the class by setting a standard for competition. This arouses the

pupils' ambition and the lessons are always well presented.

The class profits greatly by means of the many discussions that arise during the lesson. The timid girl gains self-confidence and enters into the arguments. Since corrections by classmates are more unwelcome than corrections by the teacher, the girls will prepare their lessons so as to avoid criticism. Each pupil is given an opportunity to display her knowledge and proficiency in the subject and the experience is so novel and interesting that the lesson becomes indelibly impressed on the memory.

The superiority of this method over the prevailing mode of teaching is proven by the fact that the proficiency of the girls is of a much higher standard than formerly and that they show a keener and deeper interest in their work.

It is interesting to note what the pupils themselves think of the new plan. The following are extracts from papers they have written concerning the work.

"I believe that at last we have found the missing link in making the pursuance of a subject what it ought to be. That missing link is personal interest of the pupil for the subject and its teacher. In my opinion the plan is one of the best conceived in a long while."

"Of all the favorable arguments for this new method, I believe the following is the best. Before a teacher the girls assume a quiet, restrained attitude. They hesitate to say anything unless they are absolutely sure it is correct. They are also afraid to ask questions, fearing that the latter may sound silly and stupid. Before a classmate, however, they lose all this timidity. They are not afraid to ask questions and state their views in an unrestrained, resolute voice, which makes their statement ring true."

"Each chairman has her own original way of asking questions. Thus the girls have an opportunity of having questions given in various ways."

"Personally, I prefer a girl to act as chairman, because it affords a kind of novelty and the spirit of competition enters into you to see if you can beat

the other girls at their game."

"It trains the girl to speak in a good, clear voice, and to have enough confidence in herself to speak before an audience."

"Another one of the many good points in self-government is the fact that a girl, since she is with the class more than the teacher, knows the ones who are content to let others do the work and will therefore call on them to recite."

"It is more interesting to do things for ourselves than to have others do them for us. We all grow more ambitious and aim for the best."

"I think this sort of lesson is extremely beneficial and interesting. It keeps each girl on the alert to watch for criticisms. I think everyone will agree that a girl can lead her schoolmates better than a teacher, for, since she is a pupil herself, she knows a pupil's ways and understandings."

"This method takes away the formality and schoolroom atmosphere that prevail when the teacher presides. Girls feel more responsibility and more independent, when the lesson is placed in their hands."

"This method proves its worth. Ask any girl what period she enjoys the most and the answer is 'Biology.' Ask her why and she will tell you that something interesting is always going on in the Biology class. The evidence of the girls on the subject proves that they like the plan. If you question them further, you will find out that the ones who have been chairmen think very differently about the teachers' justice when they see the things they have to cope with."

"I can truthfully say that because of this self-government system that has been introduced into the Biology room, I look forward to this period with more enjoyment than any other recitation."

"It is certainly to be rejoiced at, that at last teachers have realized the necessity of leaving pupils to their own abilities, and allow them to bring these abilities to the surface unrestrainedly. A pupil is less bashful before one of her fellow classmates than before a teacher.

Thus when we have one of our own members as a chairman of the period, we are better able to get up and converse volubly, in other words, we lose our timidity."

"In the Biology room, this system is admirably carried on and with the help of the teacher who occasionally explains and criticises during the lesson, we conduct our meeting with parliamentary precision. I call this recitation a meeting because it is far too interesting to be called a period. In addition to all these superlative qualities we learn just as much and in just as short a time as if the teacher were continually instructing in the front of the room, because we are more keenly interested."

A short time ago, the Biology Club visited the Sheffield Farms Pasteurizing plant. The members were given an illustrated talk on the present sanitary methods employed in milking and pasteurization and the process itself was shown them. The following day, those present at the lecture, spoke to the class about their experiences and the pupils were encouraged to ask questions. At the end of the period, all agreed that the lesson was not only very instructive but also exceedingly interesting.

The success of the above experiment has encouraged me to teach other new work in the same manner. The method is as yet in its experimental stages, but the prospect of its success seems certain.

## Extension Courses for Teachers at the College of the City of New York

STEPHEN P. DUGGAN

Director of Extension Courses for Teachers

A DEMOCRATICALLY organized system of education is not completely attained when provision is made merely for the education of the children of a community from the kindergarten to the university.

It is only attained when provision is further made:

First, for those who have been compelled to leave school early in their career in order to enter a vocation so that they may continue their education to the extent that their abilities and initiative impel them; and

Second, for those in the public employ in order that the stigma so long associated with democratic government, namely, that it is extravagant and inefficient may be removed.

The City College for these reasons has undertaken new fields of work in which it has been remarkably successful. For the benefit of those who have been deprived of a college education in their youth it has established an Evening Session. In order to improve the efficiency of those in the public service it has established Municipal Courses in the Municipal

Building. But more important than all and more successful than all others have been the Extension Courses for Teachers. About that I wish to say a few words.

Until 1908 teachers who wished to take courses either to deepen their own culture, improve their vocational efficiency, work towards a higher license, or secure additional salary increments, were compelled to take courses at private institutions at considerable expense to themselves. In that year the Head of the Department of Education at the City College suggested the establishment of Extension courses for Teachers to President Finley. The President was enthusiastic and secured the consent of the Board of Trustees, but unfortunately there was no money either to pay lecturers or for necessary expenses of printing, postage, clerical assistance, etc. The obstacles were overcome by twenty instructors of the College offering their services free for the first year, and by the teachers making a contribution of fifty cents per course to meet the expenses of admin-

istration. The second year the Board of Trustees secured from the city the sum of \$3,000 to pay the nominal compensation of \$5.00 a lecture to the College instructors who lectured.

Until last year all the courses were given at the College itself, but so many teachers were compelled to drop out during the winter because of bad weather and delays in reaching the College, assignment to part-time classes in the afternoon, etc., that it was determined to bring the courses to the teachers rather than have the teachers come to the courses at the College. Centers were therefore opened in every one of the boros.

Moreover, in order that the purely pedagogic work should have the very best instruction and supervision, superintendents and principals were invited to give the special courses in Methods of Teaching, Class Management and School Administration. These ladies and gentlemen have done this gratis, and no better refutation can be offered to the charge so frequently made that teachers only give service for which they are paid. The work done by these men and

women has been simply magnificent.

The idea of the value of these courses to the teachers of the city can perhaps be well given by the table of statistics. It could best be given, if space permitted, by the printing of letters of gratitude from teachers, principals and superintendents. The development of the Extension Courses, however, has by no means reached its completion. The next step is to have these courses count towards a degree and also to organize other courses on a post-graduate basis to enable teachers to do advanced research work in their field of education and to work towards a Master's degree, which will reduce the time pre-requisite for a principal's license.

Year	Registration	Per Cent. Increase	Annual Cost	Per Capita Cost
1908-9	2,400	—	(No appropriation made)	
1909-10	2,600	8.3	\$3,000	\$1.15
1910-11	3,000	15.7	3,000	1.00
1911-12	3,125	5.0	3,000	.95
1912-13	3,200	1.7	3,000	.93
1913-14	3,450	7.0	3,300	.95
1914-15	3,600	7 +	3,300	.91
1915-16	5,165	47.7	3,300	.63

## An International Union of Teachers

REPRESENTATIVES of several teachers' organizations met in Chicago last month and formed "The American Federation of Teachers." The objects of the new organization as given in the constitution—

Shall be to bring associations of teachers into relations of mutual assistance and co-operation; to obtain for them all the rights and benefits to which they are entitled; to raise the standard of the teaching profession by securing the conditions essential to the best professional service; and to promote such a democratization of the schools as will enable them better to equip their pupils to take their place in the industrial, social and political life of the community.

The Preamble to the Constitution is an encouraging indication that we are waking up. Altho it was not formally adopted, it was referred to the Executive Council. It is worth reading and considering, so here it is:

### PREAMBLE

We believe in democracy, and in the schools as the chief agency of democracy.

We believe that the schools have failed of their fullest attainment because of undemocratic administration, adherence to tradition, and lack of responsiveness to the needs of the community; and that the teachers must find the remedy, if it is to be found.

We believe that servility breeds servility, and that if the schools are to produce free,



unafraid men and women, American citizens of the highest type, the teachers must live and work in an atmosphere of freedom and self-respect.

We believe that the teacher is one of the most highly productive of workers, and that the best interests of the schools and of the people demand an intimate contact and an effective co-operation between the teachers and the other workers of the community—upon whom the future of democracy must depend.

The Federation is to be affiliated with the American Federation of Labor.

The following officers were elected:

*President*, CHAS. B. STILLMAN, Chicago, Ill.  
*Vice-President*, MRS. IDA L. FURSMAN, Chicago.

*Cor. Secretary*, MARGARET SNODGRASS, Chicago.

*Rec. Secretary*, MARY DWYER, Chicago.

*Fin. Secretary*, F. G. STECKER, Wilmette, Ill.

*Treasurer*, JAMES A. MEADE, Chicago.

*Trustees*, MARGARET A. HALEY, Chicago; R. D. CHADWICK, Gary, Ind.; MRS. AMELIA PRENDERGAST, Chicago; HEDWIG HOCHBAUM, Chicago; MRS. IDA HALPIN, Chicago.

## What Teachers' Unions Have Done and Can Do

Issued by The Teachers' Union of the City of  
New York, 70 Fifth Avenue, New York.

### WHAT TEACHERS' UNIONS HAVE DONE IN AMERICA AND IN ENGLAND.

(Based upon official statements published by teachers' unions)

1. Teachers' Unions have secured salary increases and have protected tenure of office.
2. They have prevented unjustifiable dismissals.
3. They have secured freedom from compulsory extraneous tasks.
4. They have obtained relief from excessive clerical duty.
5. They have eliminated the arbitrary power of supervisors.
6. They have caused reduction in the size of classes.
7. They have given free advice and free legal support to members.
8. They have caused the adoption of coördinated systems of elementary and higher education, under the control of publicly elected officials.
9. They have secured the right of teachers to belong to official bodies in control of education.
10. They have brought about the extension and liberalization of courses of study.

11. They have caused the abolition of rigid and unnatural classification of pupils on the basis of age alone, and have caused to be substituted flexible and natural classification on the basis of capacity and attainments.
12. They have reduced the pressure of study on very young pupils.
13. They have improved the qualifications of teachers.
14. They have striven to make it possible for teachers to develop their own standards of professional and civic conduct.
15. They have endeavored to secure the solidarity of the teaching profession and to extend its legitimate influence.

### WHAT THE TEACHERS' UNION CAN DO FOR THE TEACHERS OF NEW YORK CITY.

1. The Teachers' Union in New York can end the era of uncertainty regarding salary schedules and tenure of office by affiliating with the organized working class, which, more than any other class, is interested in improving conditions in the public schools.

2. The Teachers' Union can bring about the adjustment of the salary schedule to insure a living wage for the new and the apprentice members of the profession, and it can give effective aid in bringing about appointment and promotion for those whose rights are unjustly interfered with.
3. The Union can secure decent and sanitary working conditions for all teachers in the service.
4. The Union with expert assistance can determine the physical limitations in the output of energy that may be given safely by the teachers. With facts as the basis for action, the Union may demand the establishment of conditions that will enable teachers to give their best service in health and efficiency.
5. The Union can demand that educational experiments be entered upon by the only method that will secure honest and tangible results—the method of coöperation after democratic approval of the plan of experiment.
6. The Union can demand that all matters in which teachers primarily are concerned, such as pensions, hours of work, etc., be submitted by the method of referendum to the individual judgment of all the teachers.
7. The Union can and should protect its members from injustice by legal action whenever it is necessary, and without cost to the member or members chiefly concerned.
8. The Union can and should insist upon the promotion of teachers and pupils solely on the basis of merit.
9. The Union can and should demand that arbitrary and tyrannical systems of supervision and of rating be abolished, and that judgments of teaching ability be given by peers.
10. The Union can and should insist

upon the principle that the teachers themselves are the natural guardians of the training of the children, and that teachers should be given large control in accordance with this principle.

11. Teachers in Switzerland and in England have representation on controlling bodies in education. New York teachers should be given direct representation on the Board of Education.
12. The Union can and should work steadfastly for the improvement of the social welfare of the teachers in their immediate surroundings and in the broader field of society.
13. The Union can and should insist upon free courses of instruction being offered to teachers by the Department of Education whenever the action of the Department makes extra study necessary.
14. Through being affiliated with the organized workmen the Teachers' Union will be able to bring about considerable changes in the course of study, and thus the Union will make the work of the schools more valuable than it now is in preparing children for life.
15. The two million members of the organized trade unions in America want the children to be taught under constantly improving conditions. Because of this fact, the Teachers' Union can and should win its battles on the strength of its supported appeal to the public conscience, and without having recourse to the strike.

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**Are you doing your share? Send in another subscription.**

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It is just as much the duty of a teacher to read an educational journal as it is to prepare for an examination. The difference is that we are driven to the one, while the other only beckons to us.—The Educational Exchange, December, 1915.

## Even the Nation's Capital

DURING the Easter vacation teachers of the "white" high schools of Washington assembled to form a Teachers' Union, in response to a *Call* issued by a committee of seventy teachers.

The text of the *Call* follows:

### THE CALL

Whereas, Every class of people in the country, including Capital, Labor, and the Professions, have nation-wide organizations for their protection and well-being; and

Whereas, The teachers alone remain in an unorganized condition; and

Whereas, The teachers of this country, through the moulding of the political thought and the developing of the economic efficiency of each succeeding generation of citizens, control, more than any other class of people, the future of the republic, and have the least control over their own destiny; and

Whereas, A nation-wide organization of teachers, consolidated for protection, would be recognized by the Political Parties, by Capital, and by Labor, as a body possessing unwonted power; and

Whereas, Such an organization would give the teachers of the country a voice in their own affairs which they do not at present possess; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Washington High School Teachers form a union known as Local Number —, of the American Federation of Teachers hereafter to be formed; and be it further

Resolved, That the object of this organization should be, not only the protection of the interest of the teachers and the laboring classes of the country; but also, the promotion of the general interests of all the people.

Attached to the Call is a statement of the "Basis of Affiliation with the American Federation of Labor," which we reprint for the benefit of many who seem to be in need of this information:

As stated by Mr. Frank Morrison, the Secretary of the American Federation of Labor, the basis of affiliation between the American Federation of Labor and the Washington

High School Teachers would be substantially as follows:

First, Until such time as there are enough teachers' local unions throughout the country to justify the formation of an American Federation of Teachers, the Washington High School Teachers' Union would be expected to affiliate with the American Federation of Labor by taking out a charter from that organization;

Second, In order to affiliate with the American Federation of Labor, it is necessary for the Washington High School Teachers' Union to pay a charter fee, and for each one of its members pay an initiation fee, and for each member to pay thereafter sixty cents a month, fifteen cents of which goes to the American Federation of Labor;

Third, As soon as there are enough teachers' local unions, throughout the country, they will surrender their charters to the American Federation of Labor and affiliate with the American Federation of Teachers;

Fourth, The American Federation of Labor does not endorse the strike, except as a last resort; and it disapproves of it for the employees of the government, such as the Washington school teachers: it regards legislation brought about by political action as the proper procedure to be followed by the proposed organization;

Fifth, The teachers' local union shall have complete control over its own policies and affairs.

Among those who signed the Call are: G. J. JONES, L. V. LAMPSON, SARAH E. SIMONS, A. W. SPANHOOFD, W. F. DALES, SARA P. LYNCH, CLEM W. ORR, W. J. WALLIS, ROBERT A. MAURER.

### SELFISHNESS!

When the teachers demand hygienic and safe conditions for their work, it is obvious that they are selfishly concerned with their own hides. When there is an epidemic or a fire in a school, it is obvious that the teachers have neglected their duty—for it is always the children who suffer most then.



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This paper is striving to do its part  
in the creation of a real profession of  
teaching, the members of which shall  
be self-respecting and respected, thru  
stimulating clear thinking on the work  
and the social position of teachers, and  
thru intelligent criticism of systems of  
educational administration. No greater  
service than this could be rendered to  
the children of the state.

## A PEDAGOGICAL UPRISING

No boss either in politics or in educa-  
tion dares to drive his vassals into an  
economic corner; for thus are timid  
hares transformed into springing cata-  
mounts.

The teaching corps of New York City,  
or at least a majority of it, has within  
the month, experienced this threatening

transformation. And the bosses, the  
leaders in the old organizations of teach-  
ers, stand back in amazement. The  
teachers themselves having felt the un-  
accustomed thrill of one courageous act,  
like the feeling, and do not want to go  
back to lapping milk and nibbling let-  
tuce.

For about one year the Pension Com-  
mittee of the Federation of Teachers'  
Associations of New York City, an or-  
ganization made up of the presidents of  
the old line organizations, has been  
working on the provisions of a pension  
bill for all the members of the teaching  
and supervising staff. As long as the  
provisions of the bill were kept sacred,  
no fault could be found with the work  
of the Committee, since there was nothing  
that could be said on information.  
So it was also when the Federation's  
plan after inspection by the City Pension  
Commission was found to be unsafe as  
the actuaries see things. Even when the  
City Pension Commission's Plan absor-  
bed the tolerable features of the Fed-  
eration plan the policy of secrecy con-  
tinued, and the teachers had to guess  
what was to be in their packages.

Association after association was asked  
and expected to ratify the work of the  
pension workers, an act that was easy  
under the circumstances of autocratic  
rule within the organizations. Criticism  
of the pension plan was discredited on  
the ground that the Committee deserved  
support for the hard work it had under-  
taken and accomplished. Individuals  
who had some counter proposals to make  
were attacked publicly by members of  
the Federation. Thus, it was not known  
to anyone outside the Federation and  
those close to it just what the provisions  
of the pension law would be until the  
bill was ready and about to be intro-  
duced into the State Legislature.

Then it was discovered that the bill  
provided for very high rates of deduc-  
tion from the salaries of teachers in  
order that it might be possible to estab-  
lish a sound pension law providing for  
retirement of all teachers and officials  
after thirty-five years of service on a  
half-pay pension. After the eighteenth

year of service the rate of deduction was to become 8 per cent. of the yearly salary. Altho the City was also made to participate in the establishment of the pension fund by the payment of a dollar for every dollar paid by a teacher, still the proposed law was under suspicion from the moment it was published.

It was steadily maintained by the promoters of the bill that the teachers were not experts on pension matters, and thus in reality had no valid right to possession of the technical details. However trivial may be the knowledge of the actuary's science among teachers, it would seem that each teacher might fairly be considered an expert on the question of whether he could afford to pay so high a rate of deduction.

Many teachers in the early years of service were obliged to contemplate the necessity of meeting payments by the principle of salary deduction extending thru an entire generation of time. It was not a pleasant prospect. It was even a tragedy in the cases of many teachers in the lower grades of the elementary schools whose salaries have always been low. To add to the seeming injustice of the whole system of pensions the higher paid officials on retirement were to receive an amount per year more than four times the salary of a teacher beginning her service.

Above all it was tyrannical that the law was to be forced upon the teachers without any pretense of an effort to obtain their consent to its provisions. The most astonishing fact of the whole campaign of pension agitation was the ignorance and indifference displayed by the promoters of the bill in the educational system, and even by the educational authorities themselves who had no chance of participating in its exceptional benefits in restricted circles, to the rank injustice of forcing teachers to endure a loss of salary against their will.

And so there was an uprising of class teachers, a furious, savage uprising which even coercion rappant could not

destroy. A referendum vote sadly delayed and finally discredited by the President of the Board of Education after he had agreed to its being carried out showed that 11,000 teachers were against the bill, while 8,000 were all that the supporters of the bill with all their power of coercion could muster. The fight extended to the Legislature, and overturned the program for passing laws more important to the solons at Albany. It was a teachers' fight against anyone and everyone who was against them. It was the fight of vassals driven into an economic corner. And the drivers were the stupidest of all drivers—politicians in education.

Things will never be the same down in the ranks after this. Thank the Lord for that!

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### ECONOMY

THE STATESMAN differs from the politician chiefly in the length of his vision. The two may be equally intelligent, equally honest, equally devoted to the interests of the public. But where one uses a telescope, the other uses a microscope. Where one sees people, the other sees only Tom, Dick and Harry. Where one sees generations in flux, the other sees only the taxpayer.

The administration entrusted with public funds and a public school system, we are told by one recently honored by election to a position of trust, is responsible to the taxpayer. It is well for those in authority to be constantly aware of their responsibilities. Of course we are responsible to the taxpayer. Unfortunately the gentleman does not define his responsibility. Having been educated since the war of the slaveholder's rebellion, we assume that he has in mind the responsibility to provide for the taxpayer the best possible conditions for life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. We assume that he means the responsibility to conserve the resources of the community for future use; the responsibility to obtain for the taxpayer the best that human ingenuity can contrive in the way of public health,

safety and progressive development. There is also the responsibility, we assume, to give the taxpayer an education adequate for his station in life. For this purpose it is necessary to catch the taxpayer young, with the result that the taxpayer gets his education before he begins to pay taxes, and then pays for it later, in the form of education for the next generation. Again, there is the responsibility to prevent the demoralization of youth, thru whatever agencies, resulting in vice and crime. And finally there is the responsibility to educate the community as to the best way of spending money to meet those needs.

It has become altogether too common for those in responsible positions to speak of their responsibility to the taxpayers as tho this were somehow in conflict with their responsibility to the human beings who make up the community. We apologize to the taxpayer for erecting substantial public buildings or for buying modern equipment; we neglect necessary repairs and improvements in every department (except the repairing of fences), on the pretext that we are anxious to save the taxpayer's money. But this is all false.

The administration's responsibility to the child and to his mother is no less than its responsibility to the taxpayer. Under the cloak of economy we abandon the very foundations of our social structure to corruption and decay. The taxpayer may be flattered by this solicitude for his feelings or for his purse, but he will not be thankful to the administration that robs the child to enrich the man. The taxpayer himself, in his capacity of Private Citizen knows better than to postpone to next year the repairs needed in his own buildings; he knows better than to buy the cheapest that the market offers—he seeks the best that he can get for cash or credit; he knows better than to underfeed the goose that lays the golden eggs.

It is a short-visioned responsibility that offers to the taxpayer economy at the expense of downright thoroughness and

efficiency. The public does not wish to have its business conducted on the theory that it profits from the underpayment and the overworking of its employees. The administration may see glory in a handsome balance sheet, but the public suffers for the unwisdom of the administration long after the ink and glory have faded. When administrators learn that economy and low tax rates are not synonymous, they may begin to discharge their responsibilities to the taxpayer, and not till then.

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### CO-OPERATION—WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

EVERY DOLLAR of the public money, we are told, should bring as much as it may legitimately be made to bring. Which seems to be reasonable enough on the face of it. But the point of the remark depends upon the application of it. In the days of rather crude corruption, every dollar of the public's money was expected to bring a maximum of "loyalty" to the machine in power, purchased thru patronage the selling of franchises—selling is here used in its broadest sense—the granting of privileges, the letting of contracts. There is evidence that the public money yielded much fat. Today these methods are beneath the notice of the high-minded reformers in authority in our best cities. The yield is of a different kind. Today the public money must be made to bring distinction for efficiency and economy—every dollar of it.

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In too many classrooms no motive for study is provided. Manual training teachers often keep boys working at joints for weeks before giving them anything to join that will be of value. Much of the work in composition is based upon matter apart from the child's life and experience. In arithmetic few problems outside the text-books are given. In history and literature there is too little interpretation and too little appeal to the dramatic instinct and the power of visualizing.

**THE WASHINGTON UNION**

It is particularly gratifying that the teachers of the capital city have been aroused to the need for a more modern type of group activity, since the very atmosphere of Washington is saturated with the odor of lubricating oil for political machinery. The civil employes of the government seem to have awakened about the same time to a realization of their duties and responsibilities as human beings and workers: they also are intent upon wresting for themselves the opportunity to live lives more in keeping with the resources of present day civilization.

It seems that a majority of the high school teachers in the city are entirely sympathetic to the movement. Four of the newspapers printed in Washington have given full and sympathetic notices of the agitation for a teachers' union, several times during the past month. All of the high school principals favor the union, altho they are not to be admitted into its ranks. The Assistant Superintendent of Schools, several members of the School Board and a number of Congressmen interested in District affairs are in favor of the union.

One of the most favorable indications in the movement is the fact that so many of the teachers look upon the union as a potent agency for social service. There is confidence among the teachers of New York, Chicago and Washington that the proposed national (or "International," eventually including Canadian teachers) union is destined to become the strongest organization of workers in the country. Plans are under way for a conference to consider steps toward an American Federation of Teachers, to be held at the time of the N E A meeting in New York, next July.

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Teachers who use all their time and energy in teaching children are likely to become childish. We ought to spend a little time every day in communion or contact with strong, mature minds actively engaged in other departments of the world's work.—The Illinois Teacher.

**THE MOVEMENT TOWARD TEACHERS' UNIONS**

THE MOVEMENT to unionize the teachers of New York City thru an affiliation of the Teachers' League with the American Federation of Labor is indicative of a situation in public education that must be recognized, more agreeable tho it may be to gloss it over or neglect it entirely. Personally we do not like to think of the teaching profession as having closer affiliations with one specific occupational group, than it has with all other occupational groups. On the other hand, it is incontestible that the Teachers' Federation of Chicago, thru its affiliation with organized labor, has been able to do constructive work for the cause of education that apparently could not have been done in any other way.

Nor is this all. We have repeatedly pointed out that the welfare of the people's schools depends primarily upon the status that is accorded the classroom teacher. It is beside the question to say that the teacher has the status that he deserves, or that the public will respect the teacher whenever he renders efficient public service. Generations of teachers have rendered a high type of public service without adequate recognition. This is the solid fact that those who condemn teachers for seeking alliance with organized labor will do well to ponder. So far as occupational groups and classes are concerned, the keenest sympathy with, and appreciation for, the work of the classroom teacher has come from organized labor. Personally we believe that teaching, as a branch of public service, should be free from specific alliances; but it still remains true that the movement toward these alliances is indicative of a sad deficiency in the attitude of the general public toward the work of teaching. W C BAGLEY, in *School and Home Education*, April, 1916.

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The final legal word has now been said on the right of teachers to join unions. On May 1st the Court of Appeals of Illinois decided against the School Board of Chicago in favor of the teachers.

### INDIVIDUAL INSTRUCTION

PRESIDENT FREDERIC BURK of the San Francisco State Normal School sends us his Monograph C, containing data, analysis, conclusions and argument on an experiment in a system of individual instruction carried on under his direction for two years.

From the data it appears that *the slowest pupils, in normal health of body and mind, will complete the usual eight grades of the elementary school in not more than seven years.*

*That the fastest will finish in not more than five years.*

*That between these extremes, the rates are very evenly distributed.*

*That in consequence, pupils who enter the school at 6 years of age will complete the eight grades between the ages of 10 and 13 years.*

Moreover, under this system *all pupils will finish the elementary schooling, which is in startling contrast to the prevailing conditions, under which more than half the children leave school before completing the sixth grade.* The Individual Instruction system gives a *thoroughness and efficiency to every pupil quite beyond the possibility of the lockstep system, and lastly (tax-payers please notice), individual instruction costs less than class instruction.*

We are in perfect sympathy with Mr Burk's assault upon the vicious lockstep system, which he loathes so vigorously and picturesquely in his Monograph A. We are particularly pleased with his paragraphs on the inertia of administrative departments, the timidity and indifference of teachers, and the obstructiveness of the public in relation to new educational ideas. We have no doubt whatever that much of the teacher's effort is today wasted thru the mechanism of class instruction, thru our arbitrary schemes of promotion, thru our failure to select the essentials, and thru our systematic refusal to recognize individual differences among children in the organization and management of our schools. We believe also that the plan which he describes is entirely practicable, and that

it is especially suitable for rural schools, certain types of evening and continuation schools, to "special classes" and for certain kinds of high schools.

The details of the experiment show that not only do individual children vary in the rate at which they are able to learn, but that each child varies in his own rate from time to time, and from subject to subject. It has been impossible to establish, from this experiment, the existence of slow, medium and rapid "types" of children, and the slow rates of progress as well as the rapid rates tend "to average out." The extreme variation between the total accomplishments of the slowest and the most rapid pupils are much less than the variation between the slowest and fastest in any given semester, or in any given subject. The evidence points to the significant conclusion that rates of excessive slowness, *are as a rule sporadic, due to transient and removable causes.*

But when we have said that the instruction in the rudiments can be greatly accelerated by substituting the individual instruction methods (in this experiment carried on by means of normal school pupils, not by experienced teachers) for the common lockstep, and that with a saving of cost, we have left untouched certain problems that are perhaps quite as important as those solved. There seems to be thruout this report the assumption that the major purpose of the school is to impart certain information, or to drill in certain processes—arithmetical operations, grammatical analysis, etc. There is no reference to what the child is to learn from his contact—yes, and his friction—with others. It seems to us that the *learning* supplied by the school, while essential, is but a fraction of the school's ultimate justification. The elimination, or great reduction, of the class exercise, removes from the school an opportunity for performing some of its most valuable service to the individual child and to the community. It may be fairly questioned whether the gain in individual proficiency in the fundamentals is not purchased too dearly



when it means so thoro a detachment of the child's mental development from that of his neighbors.

If the information that a child can accumulate in the years from infancy to adolescence is to be the measure of "education," the individual instruction system should be installed as extensively and as rapidly as possible forthwith. This seems to have been the assumption back of various isolated attempts to give single children the benefits of continuous application of drill and information. We have in this country at the present time a number of children whose first claim to distinction lies in the fact that they were able to qualify for college entrance examination at the absurd ages of eleven to thirteen or fourteen years. It remains to be seen whether these children will be able to maintain their supposed lead in civic, vocational and social adjustment. We suspect that an eleven-year-old child with all the knowledge prescribed for the fourteen year old child is physiologically incapable of full appreciation of his "knowledge." And we feel very confident that a child separated from his fellows during the growing years for the purpose of accelerating the stuffing process is likely to be socially deficient.

But Mr Burk does not isolate the children. The shortening of the time required under his system to accomplish the prescribed instruction liberates many hours a week that may be used for the socializing activities, and for enrichment of life generally. It may also be said that the common experiences and ideas that our children must have as a basis for democratic co-operation need not be obtained thru the usual school subjects. We should wish, however, that these school experiences did represent a real socializing force.

We should take decided exception to Mr Burk's economy calculation, wherein he shows that the improved methods would enable us to reduce the size of our school population, in eliminating "retardation" and in shortening the average length of time required to complete

the grammar school course. This argument implies that society's minimum requirement consists of certain quantities of arithmetic, reading, history, etc. The best we can say on the economy side is that improved methods enable us to get more for the same expenditure of money.

In spite of apparent differences in aims, we find this monograph extremely suggestive, and we hope that other schools will have the courage to experiment extensively with the individual instruction plan.

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### GOOD ANYWHERE

THE PRESS COMMITTEE of the Federation of Women High School Teachers of Chicago recommends the following plan of action:

That a teacher be found in each school who will undertake to arouse individual patrons of the schools, and organizations interested in them, to the danger in the present plan of increasing the size of classes, to its effect upon the amount of time that can be given by teachers to individual pupils, and, in general, to the increasingly bad working conditions in the high schools. Those interested are to be asked to write letters to the daily papers on the subject in an attempt to arouse public sentiment. The Federation sees the gravity in the fact that some members of the Board of Education confuse the terms cheapness, and economy, and are inclined to base their opinion of the efficiency of any given school upon the per capita cost of educating its pupils.

Change the name of the Association and of the city, and it is a good recommendation to take home with you, wherever you may be. Try it on your typewriter.

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Every new subscription means added strength to the movement for democracy.

## IN THE TRENCHES

At THE Kansas State Teachers Convention this winter, Miss Anna Kelley, one of the Topeka school principals, spoke entertainingly of the work of teachers, in response to the toast, "In the Trenches." The following report is taken from the Topeka Daily Capital:

I assume that when the officer gave out this subject, she had in mind certain questions that must be answered by those who would enlist. For instance: Can you teach reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, grammar, spelling, music, art, physical training, embroidery, crocheting, landscape and market gardening, courtesy, honesty, truthfulness, punctuality, morality and thrift? Can you referee a game of football and reduce a compound fracture? Can you classify defectives and make them intelligent?

Can you make satisfactory reports to city superintendent, State superintendent, city board of health, the State board of health, the State fire marshal, the city treasurer and the Rockefeller Foundation? Can you be an expert in your line of work, and still in humility and gratitude allow the superintendent, supervisors, principals, college experimenters, newspapers, parents, uncles and cousins, street car conductors and street corner loafers tell you how you are doing it wrong? Can you, when you feel it is wrong, carry out the captain's plan? If it is successful, can you vicariously efface yourself, and if it is a failure, can you take all the blame?

When the price of food and uniforms double, can you bear to be told that we need more captains and generals and must economize somewhere? Then can you consult a diet book and find that three-fourths of the human family eat too much, and darn your uniform and cover the place with embroidered forget-me-nots?

Can you see the crows' feet coming and the gray hairs appearing faster than you can pull them out, and read with equanimity that a college professor has solved all the problems of primary education and thinks every child is entitled to a beautiful teacher? If you can, you are fit for service in the trenches.

Statement of the ownership, management, circulation, etc., required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912, of THE AMERICAN TEACHER, published monthly (except July and August), at New York, N. Y., for April 1, 1918: State of New York, County of Kings, ss.:

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and County aforesaid, personally appeared Jeanette G. Glassberg, who, having been duly sworn according to law, depose and says that she is the Business Manager of the AMERICAN TEACHER and that the following is, to the best of her knowledge and belief a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 443, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are:

Publisher—THE AMERICAN TEACHER CO., INC., 129 Lafayette St., New York, N. Y.

Editor—HENRY R. LINVILLE, 60 Terrace Ave., Jamaica, N. Y.

Managing Editor—BENJ. C. GRUENBERG, 230 W. 107th St., New York, N. Y.

Business Managers—JEANETTE G. GLASSBERG, 417 15th Street, Brooklyn, N. Y.

2. That the owners are:—THE AMERICAN TEACHER CO., INC., 129 Lafayette St., New York; HENRY R. LINVILLE, 60 Terrace Ave., Jamaica, N. Y.; BENJAMIN C. GRUENBERG, 230 W. 107th St., New York, N. Y.; J. EDWARD MAYMAN, 814 E. Parkway, Bklyn., N. Y.; GABRIEL B. MASON, 1107 Forest Ave., New York, N. Y.; MARK HOFFMAN, 1145 Vyse Ave., New York, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent. or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are—None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

JEANETTE G. GLASSBERG,  
Business Manager

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 3rd day of April, 1918.

(Seal) BENJAMIN T. SNYDER  
(My commission expires March 30, 1918.)  
No. 8027

When teachers wear themselves out with work and worry, we approve because we all believe in co-operation. When teachers ask the rest of the community to co-operate by providing adequate salaries and favorable working conditions, we are told that business is business.

## Labor and Education

At a mass meeting called by the Conference of Organized Labor on Industrial Education, in New York City, the following "demands" were presented by Peter J. Brady, Secretary of the Conference. Teachers have from time to time made similar demands; but not frequently with the vigor and assurance that we find in the present formulation:

1. Immediate grant of funds for the erection of new school buildings to provide every child decent accommodations in a full-time class, without resort to the deplorable expedient of the double shift, commonly designated as the duplicate school, or the double session.
2. The immediate erection of temporary buildings or renting of other buildings to provide all necessary school facilities to relieve every class with over forty children and to relieve all overcrowding and part time.
3. Immediate placing of kindergartens on a basis that will make them sufficiently attractive and desirable for all children of kindergarten age.
4. Immediate development of every recreation and community center to its fullest capacity, but under the complete control of the Board of Education; the entire expense of management and maintenance to be borne by the city.
5. Immediate provision in every school in the city of ideal playground facilities at the city's expense, so that after-school athletics for boys and girls will become a regular part of our educational system.
6. Immediate adoption of plans to furnish school accommodations to all people desiring elementary or high school instruction at night.
7. Immediate opening of night and day school classes for the teaching of English to foreigners.
8. Immediate provision for the establishment of summer schools and regular pay for teachers in those schools.
9. Immediate appointment of all necessary regular school teachers so that there will be not more than forty children in any class.
10. Immediate elimination of the substitute teaching evil and their appointments and assignments made regular and according to law.
11. Immediate payment to all teachers of their legal salaries according to their official rating and work.
12. Immediate stopping of all attacks upon all branches of the teaching staff by city officials and Board of Education, so that teachers will be able to devote all their time and attention to the proper educational development of school children.
13. Immediate organization of advisory committees for each trade in which the schools are now giving instruction; committees to be of equal number of employers and representatives of the union with power.
14. Immediate adoption of all rules and regulations by the Board of Education for the establishment of compulsory continuation schools for all children with working papers between the ages of fourteen and sixteen for eight hours a week between the hours of 8 a. m. and 5 p. m., Saturday afternoons excepted.
15. Immediate elimination from the course of study of any activity which takes away from the essentials and fundamentals of education in the elementary schools.
16. Immediate provision for comprehensive experiments with shorter courses of study, prevocational schooling, and intermediate or junior high schools.
17. Immediate elimination of the monitor or assistant teachers evil, whereby pupils are taken from higher grades to supervise and direct children in the lower grades as assistant teachers.